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‘JAPAN ROAD TO THE KENTUCKY DERBY’ EXPANDS; TOP JUVENILE DIRT RACE ADDED TO CREATE THREE-RACE SERIES

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Thursday, Aug. 31, 2017) – The race that often decides Japan’s champion 2-year-old dirt horse has been added to the “Japan Road to the Kentucky Derby,” a series of races that could produce a starter in America’s greatest race, the 144th running of the \$2 million Kentucky Derby Presented by Yum! Brands.

The **Zen-Nippon Nisai Yushun**, a **National Association of Racing (NAR)** race that is annually contested over one mile at **Kawasaki Racecourse**, will be positioned on Dec. 13 between the **Cattleya Sho** for 2-year-olds on Nov. 25 and the **Hyacinth** for 3-year-olds in mid-February. Both the Cattleya Sho and Hyacinth are one-mile **Japan Racing Association (JRA)** races that are staged at **Tokyo Racecourse**. The date for the Hyacinth will be announced this fall.

“Churchill Downs is thrilled to build upon our partnership with the JRA and welcome the NAR into this appealing series,” said **Mike Ziegler**, executive director of racing for Churchill Downs Incorporated. “Japan is a burgeoning market with considerable international interest, and we’re keen to provide a useful and meaningful path to the Kentucky Derby for their world-class competitors and horsemen.”

The “Japan Road to the Kentucky Derby” is a separate sequence of three races from America’s 36-race “Road to the Kentucky Derby” series. One position in the starting gate for the 1 ¼-mile Kentucky Derby, to be run for 3-year-olds at world-famous Churchill Downs in Louisville, Ky. on Saturday, May 5, 2018, will be awarded to the horse that accrues the most points in the “Japan Road to the Kentucky Derby” and accepts an invitation to compete.

Points awarded to the Top 4 finishing positions in the Cattleya Sho and Zen-Nippon Nisai Yushun will be 10-4-2-1, respectively, while the Hyacinth will carry a point value of 30-12-6-3.

Only one invitation to compete in the Kentucky Derby will be extended with preference given to the horses with the most points in the “Japan Road to the Kentucky Derby” series. No invitation will be extended beyond the Top 4 point earners but if a horse also qualifies through America’s 36-race “Road to the Kentucky Derby” series, the invite will be extended to the next eligible horse. If two or more horses have the same number of points, the tiebreakers are earnings in non-restricted stakes races followed by lifetime earnings.

“It is with great pleasure to receive the news that our featured 2-year-old race, the Zen-Nippon Nisai Yushun, will be included in the ‘Japan Road to the Kentucky Derby,’ a series of races which provides an entry to the Kentucky Derby for a horse from Japan,” said **Masanobu Nakajima**, President of **Kanagawa Prefecture Kawasaki Racing Association**. “The Zen-Nippon Nisai Yushun is a domestic exchange race in which both JRA and NAR horses can run and it is a race to decide the champion 2-year-old dirt horse in Japan. I am sure that with the inclusion of our race in this series, it opens the door for horses on the NAR circuit not only to the Kentucky Derby but also to the world. It is my earnest wish for this race to be a high-profile race and for our racing association to further promote NAR racing.”

Two horses based in Japan have run in the Kentucky Derby: **Ski Captain** (14th in 1995) and **Lani** (ninth in 2016).

U Carrot Farm’s Epicharis (Jpn) was last year’s point leader after a three-quarter length victory in the Hyacinth. He’d later run second in the UAE Derby (GII) but quarantine matters made it problematic for the colt to be seriously considered for the Derby. Instead, Epicharis (Jpn) targeted the Belmont Stakes (GI) but was scratched on the morning of the race after inflammation was detected in his right front leg.

This is the sixth year that Churchill Downs Racetrack will use a sliding scale of points awarded to the Top 4 finishers in choice races to determine preference for its 20-horse Kentucky Derby field. At least 20 horses have entered the 1 ¼-mile classic for 3-year-old Thoroughbreds every year since 2004, and 17 of the last 19 years.

America's 36-race "Road to the Kentucky Derby" series will commence at the home of the Kentucky Derby on Saturday, Sept. 16 with Churchill Downs' \$150,000 Iroquois (GIII) for 2-year-olds at 1 1/16 miles.

The full schedule was announced Thursday, which also included a new initiative to create a path for horses based in Europe to gain a berth in the Kentucky Derby. Much like the "Japan Road to the Kentucky Derby," the new **"European Road to the Kentucky Derby"** is a stand-alone series of seven races that is separate from America's 36-race "Road to the Kentucky Derby" sequence. Only one position in the Kentucky Derby starting gate will be awarded to the horse that accrues the most points in the "European Road to the Kentucky Derby" and accepts an invitation to compete.

Since 1967, there have been 36 horses who previously raced outside North America and ran in the Kentucky Derby. Venezuela's **Canonero II** won the 1971 Derby, while **Bold Arrangement (GB)**, who was campaigned in Great Britain and France, finished second to **Ferdinand** in the 1986 renewal.

2017-18 JAPAN ROAD TO THE KENTUCKY DERBY SCHEDULE

3 Races

Date	Race	Racetrack	Distance	1 st (Points)	2 nd (Points)	3 rd (Points)	4 th (Points)
Nov. 25	Cattleya Sho	Tokyo Racecourse	1 Mile	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
Dec. 13	+Zen-Nippon Nisai Yushun	Kawasaki Racecourse	1 Mile	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
*Mid-Feb.	Hyacinth	Tokyo Racecourse	1 Mile	(30)	(12)	(6)	(3)

2017-18 ROAD TO THE KENTUCKY DERBY SCHEDULE

36 Races

Kentucky Derby Prep Season (20 races)

Date	Race	Racetrack	Distance	1 st (Points)	2 nd (Points)	3 rd (Points)	4 th (Points)
Sept. 16	Iroquois	Churchill Downs	1 1/16 Miles	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
Sept. 30	FrontRunner	Santa Anita	1 1/16 Miles	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
Oct. 7	Champagne	Belmont Park	1 Mile	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
Oct. 7	Breeders' Futurity	Keeneland	1 1/16 Miles	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
Nov. 4	Breeders' Cup Juvenile	Del Mar	1 1/16 Miles	(20)	(8)	(4)	(2)
Nov. 18	Delta Downs Jackpot	Delta Downs	1 1/16 Miles	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
*Nov. 25	Remsen	Aqueduct	1 1/8 Miles	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
Nov. 25	Kentucky Jockey Club	Churchill Downs	1 1/16 Miles	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
*Dec. 9	Los Alamitos Futurity	Los Alamitos	1 1/16 Miles	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
Dec. 17	+Springboard Mile	Remington Park	1 Mile	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
*Jan. 1	Jerome	Aqueduct	1 Mile 70 Yards	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
*Jan. 13	Sham	Santa Anita	1 Mile	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
Jan. 15	Smarty Jones	Oaklawn Park	1 Mile	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
*Jan. 20	Lecomte	Fair Grounds	1 Mile 70 Yards	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
*Feb. 3	Robert B. Lewis	Santa Anita	1 1/16 Miles	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
*Feb. 3	Withers	Aqueduct	1 1/16 Miles	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
*Feb. 3	Holy Bull	Gulfstream Park	1 1/16 Miles	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
*Feb. 10	Sam F. Davis	Tampa Bay Downs	1 1/16 Miles	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
*Feb. 17	El Camino Real Derby	Golden Gate	1 1/8 Miles (S)	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
Feb. 19	Southwest	Oaklawn Park	1 1/16 Miles	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)

Kentucky Derby Championship Series (16 races)

Date	Race	Racetrack	Distance	1 st (Points)	2 nd (Points)	3 rd (Points)	4 th (Points)
*Feb. 24	Risen Star	Fair Grounds	1 1/16 Miles	(50)	(20)	(10)	(5)
*March 3	Gotham	Aqueduct	1 1/16 Miles	(50)	(20)	(10)	(5)
*March 3	Fountain of Youth	Gulfstream Park	1 1/16 Miles	(50)	(20)	(10)	(5)
*March 10	San Felipe	Santa Anita	1 1/16 Miles	(50)	(20)	(10)	(5)
*March 10	Tampa Bay Derby	Tampa Bay Downs	1 1/16 Miles	(50)	(20)	(10)	(5)
March 17	Rebel	Oaklawn Park	1 1/16 Miles	(50)	(20)	(10)	(5)
March 17	Spiral	Turfway Park	1 1/8 Miles (S)	(20)	(8)	(4)	(2)
*March 24	UAE Derby	Meydan Racecourse	1 3/16 Miles	(100)	(40)	(20)	(10)
*March 24	Louisiana Derby	Fair Grounds	1 1/8 Miles	(100)	(40)	(20)	(10)
March 25	Sunland Derby	Sunland Park	1 1/8 Miles	(50)	(20)	(10)	(5)
*March 31	Florida Derby	Gulfstream Park	1 1/8 Miles	(100)	(40)	(20)	(10)
*April 7	Wood Memorial	Aqueduct	1 1/8 Miles	(100)	(40)	(20)	(10)
*April 7	Blue Grass	Keeneland	1 1/8 Miles	(100)	(40)	(20)	(10)
*April 7	Santa Anita Derby	Santa Anita	1 1/8 Miles	(100)	(40)	(20)	(10)
April 14	Arkansas Derby	Oaklawn Park	1 1/8 Miles	(100)	(40)	(20)	(10)
*April 14	Lexington	Keeneland	1 1/16 Miles	(20)	(8)	(4)	(2)

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2017-18 EUROPEAN ROAD TO THE KENTUCKY DERBY SCHEDULE

7 Races

Date	Race	Racetrack	Distance	1 st (Points)	2 nd (Points)	3 rd (Points)	4 th (Points)
Sept. 24	+Juddmonte Beresford	Naas (Ire)	1 Mile (T)	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
Sept. 30	+Juddmonte Royal Lodge	Newmarket (GB)	1 Mile (T)	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
Oct. 1	+Qatar Prix Jean-Luc Lagardère	Chantilly (Fr)	1 Mile (T)	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
Oct. 28	+Racing Post Trophy	Doncaster (GB)	1 Mile (T)	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
March 1	+Road to the Kentucky Derby Condition Stakes	Kempton Park (GB)	1 Mile (S)	(20)	(8)	(4)	(2)
March 2	+Patton (Listed)	Dundalk (Ire)	1 Mile (S)	(20)	(8)	(4)	(2)
March 30	+Burradon	Newcastle (GB)	1 Mile (S)	(30)	(12)	(6)	(3)

2017-18 ROAD TO THE KENTUCKY OAKS SCHEDULE

31 Races

Kentucky Oaks Prep Season (16 races)

Date	Race	Racetrack	Distance	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
Sept. 16	Pocahontas	Churchill Downs	1 1/16 Miles	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
Sept. 30	Chandeler	Santa Anita	1 1/16 Miles	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
Oct. 6	Alcibiades	Keeneland	1 1/16 Miles	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
Oct. 8	Frizette	Belmont Park	1 Mile	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
Nov. 4	BC Juvenile Fillies	Del Mar	1 1/16 Miles	(20)	(8)	(4)	(2)
Nov. 18	Delta Downs Princess	Delta Downs	1 Mile	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
*Nov. 25	Demoiselle	Aqueduct	1 1/8 Miles	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
Nov. 25	Golden Rod	Churchill Downs	1 1/16 Miles	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
*Dec. 9	Starlet	Los Alamitos	1 1/16 Miles	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
*Jan. 7	Santa Ynez	Santa Anita	7 Furlongs	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
*Jan. 14	Busanda	Aqueduct	1 Mile 70 Yards	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
*Jan. 20	Silverbulletday	Fair Grounds	1 Mile 70 Yards	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
*Feb. 3	Forward Gal	Gulfstream Park	7 Furlongs	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
*Feb. 4	Las Virgenes	Santa Anita	1 Mile	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
*Feb. 10	+Suncoast	Tampa Bay Downs	1 Mile 40 Yards	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)
Feb. 10	Martha Washington	Oaklawn Park	1 Mile	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)

Kentucky Oaks Championship Series (15 races)

Date	Race	Racetrack	Distance	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
*Feb 22	UAE Oaks	Meydan Racecourse	1 3/16 Miles	(50)	(20)	(10)	(5)
*Feb. 24	Busher	Aqueduct	1 1/16 Miles	(50)	(20)	(10)	(5)
*Feb. 24	Rachel Alexandra	Fair Grounds	1 1/16 Miles	(50)	(20)	(10)	(5)
*March 3	Davona Dale	Gulfstream Park	1 Mile	(50)	(20)	(10)	(5)
*March 3	Santa Ysabel	Santa Anita	1 1/16 Miles	(50)	(20)	(10)	(5)
March 10	Honeybee	Oaklawn Park	1 1/16 Miles	(50)	(20)	(10)	(5)
March 17	Bourbonette Oaks	Turfway Park	1 Mile (S)	(20)	(8)	(4)	(2)
*March 24	Fair Grounds Oaks	Fair Grounds	1 1/16 Miles	(100)	(40)	(20)	(10)
March 25	Sunland Park Oaks	Sunland Park	1 1/16 Miles	(50)	(20)	(10)	(5)
*March 31	Gulfstream Park Oaks	Gulfstream Park	1 1/16 Miles	(100)	(40)	(20)	(10)
*April 7	Ashland	Keeneland	1 1/16 Miles	(100)	(40)	(20)	(10)
*April 7	Santa Anita Oaks	Santa Anita	1 1/16 Miles	(100)	(40)	(20)	(10)
*April 7	Gazelle	Aqueduct	1 1/8 Miles	(100)	(40)	(20)	(10)
April 13	Fantasy	Oaklawn Park	1 1/16 Miles	(100)	(40)	(20)	(10)
*April 19	Beaumont	Keeneland	7 Furlongs	(10)	(4)	(2)	(1)

+ New Race Included in Series.

(T) = Turf

(S) = Synthetic

* Race dates and distances to be announced by host track; date based on recent historical placement.

Note: Schedule subject to change.

Churchill Downs, the world's most legendary racetrack, has conducted Thoroughbred racing and presented America's greatest race, the Kentucky Derby, continuously since 1875. Located in Louisville, the flagship racetrack of Churchill Downs Incorporated (NASDAQ: CHDN) offers year-round simulcast wagering at the historic track. Churchill Downs will conduct the 144th running of the Kentucky Derby Presented by Yum! Brands on May 5, 2018. The track will conduct two more live racing meets in 2017: the September Meet from Sept. 15-Oct. 1 and its Fall Meet from Oct. 29-Nov. 26. An eight-time host to the Breeders' Cup World Championships, Churchill Downs will again be the site of that event on Nov. 2-3, 2018. Information is available at www.ChurchillDowns.com.

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